

May 22, 2019 - First Phone Call

Russel: Hello

Lauren: Hey Russ. I'm in another room just for a second - the girls are right next door. Um, I wanted to know if I could talk with you for just two minutes about the girls.

Russel: Okay.

Lauren: Um, I wanted to try to chat with you on Sunday, but you didn't really want to chat, which I get. Um, but then my attorney got a call from your attorney to want to know if I had talked to the girls about the divorce and I feel like that just doesn't make any sense to, like, have you talk to your dad, you talk to Mike to talk to my attorney, you talk to me, and like then telephone it all the way back, when we could just talk to each other about it.

Russel: Okay.

Lauren: Um, it seems like it would be more beneficial for everybody involved. Are you okay with that?

Russel: Sure.

Lauren: Okay. So, I'll just answer that question - No, I have not said anything to them about it yet. Um, I had actually wanted to talk to you about it. I was hoping I could talk to you about it on Sunday, but that didn't totally work out. Um, and so, I haven't said anything about it to them yet, and I am planning on chatting with their counselor and I ordered a book on Amazon. I just, I wasn't totally prepared, um, to chat with them about it, because frankly I didn't think the Judge was going to grant the bifurcation. So, I wasn't planning for it. Well, just yet. And so...

Russel: (inaudible) I think the judge - well, anyway, yeah, so go ahead.

Lauren: Well, I mean, I'm very happy about it, but...

Russel: I'm sure you are.

Lauren: ... I wasn't planning on it. Well, Russ, after really rude things - well, whatever - it doesn't matter. We won't go into that. Um, well I am, because it's something that I've been wanting for, well, a long time now. Like probably close to a year and a half, and so...

Russel: A year and a half?

Lauren: ... it's a good thing for me. Yeah.

Russel: Well... So you were planning on divorcing before you left?

Lauren: We talked about us getting divorced before I left. Like multiple times.

Russel: No... when you left, the conversation was about us working it out and trying to stay together.

Lauren: No... Well, okay... it doesn't really matter. I remember it differently.

Russel: It matters significantly. It matters a lot.

Lauren: Russ, (inaudible) ...the fact that there was a good chance that I was going to file for divorce after you were in prison. Yeah, multiple times we discussed that.

Russel: Lauren, I know that when I came in here, I was under a very different impression, and frankly, I think it's, uh, if there was that great a likelihood - a couple of things. #1 When I was still out, we would have tried to discuss that, but we never did -

Lauren: We discussed it - we discussed it multiple times, Russ.

Russel: No, here's what you told me. You had said that you were not planning on divorcing me. That you said, "I am not filing right now and that's not the way that I want to go."

Lauren: Well, that's true. I would have rather not done that. I would have rather not, Russ, but you didn't really give me a lot of choices.

Russel: Lauren, we never even tried to work it out, have a discussion or anything else. Okay?

Lauren: Well, you still haven't really apologized, so I just - I've been waiting for, like, forever.

Russel: No, I have been apologizing since I got out. Do you remember the phone calls that we had where I was at Tiffany's and I was apologizing profusely. Do you know how bad I feel? Do you have any idea? And I've apologized, I know on the phone here before. But that's not the point, Lauren. The point is when I came in here, I wanted to give you the opportunity to work through things yourself - because you had asked me to do that. Okay? And when - I feel as if the discussions that we did have previously, either didn't happen or didn't matter. All I wanted - hhhh - Do you think that I just don't care? ... Hello?

Lauren: Sorry, I was trying to make sure that I didn't interrupt.

Russel: Do you think that I don't care about you or the girls or the family?

Lauren: Well, yes, that's really how it has appeared, I mean, Russ, you have been filing horrible, horrible things about me with the Court. You've been so abusive and ...(inaudible)

Russel: Lauren, can you please tell me which things specifically you feel like I'm being unkind?

Lauren: Yeah, you said that I have debilitating illnesses that make it so I can't take care of the girls...(inaudible)

Russel: I didn't say... (inaudible)

Lauren: ...all these things... (inaudible)

Russel: Lauren -

Lauren: Yeah, you did. In the filing, you did.

Russel: I know, and I've read it, and it says that you do have - debilitating means - when you black out, does that have an effect on you?

Lauren: Yeah, do you know I no longer black out?

Russel: Well, I find that great. I'm so happy for you. Do you remember how long that has been an issue?

Lauren: Yeah, but Russ, I don't see what that has to do with anything.

Russel: Lauren, you have not told me once that you feel like you don't have the blackouts. You're not on the Medidrene, right?

Lauren: I am.

Russel: Okay. So, there - here's my point. I'm only bringing up concerns because I love the girls. I'm not trying to hurt you. I'm not trying to -

Lauren: Well, (inaudible)... [everything?] you're doing is hurting me. It's been - Russ, you've been cruel to me, for things -

Russel: Lauren, Lauren, I'm so sorry that you feel like their cruel, but as I read them, and I've read yours, here's where I'm at - Here's what I'm hearing - You feel like I'm being mean to you, and I feel like there have been a lot of mean things that you've done and said to me. Okay?

Lauren: Okay. Like what?

Russel: I think a number of the comments that you've said on the phone to me have absolutely just been horrific for me to deal with. Saying that I never loved you or never loved the girls -

Lauren: Well, Russ, you lived a double life.

Russel: Lauren, I admitted that I did some things - I made wrong choices, but those wrong choices were not an attempt to somehow go and do something to somehow hurt you. I had made



mistakes, and in all honesty, like I told you before, I was trying to go through and fix them. I have been told by an attorney not to go through and talk to people. I've talked to my parents about things now that I didn't before, because I felt like I wasn't allowed to - that I couldn't.

Lauren: But, you were fixing it with trying to - anyway - the reality is that when you say you made wrong choices and they weren't done to hurt me, you weren't thinking about us at all though, because if you had been thinking about us, you wouldn't have done things that were going to land you in this mess.

Russel: Lauren, I don't want to be here. I don't want to be away from the girls -

Lauren: Well, of course not.

Russel: And I don't want to be away from the girls and I don't think that you look back... You tell me - How did I treat you? How did I treat the girls?

Lauren: But, Russ, how it - but - I mean - you, you -

Russel: I'm just asking - How did I treat you?

Lauren: Well, you were nice to us except for all the sneaking and lying and deceit behind our backs.

Russel: I admit that I - I originally made mistakes signing those loans that I shouldn't have done. And I exacerbated the issue by trying to fix it without telling anyone. I admit that. I went in and admitted that - the 2 years before the arrest and to the extent I felt like after talking to the attorney, I felt like I could even mention to you, I did. Okay?

Lauren: You did not ever tell me that you were being investigated. Not one time.

Russel: Do you remember that I talked to you, and I said -

Lauren: Okay, well, no, wait - I don't want to do this. I'm -

Russel: Do you know why it's important? Because you and I divorced or not, it doesn't change the fact that for the rest of now and moving forward, we have 3 girls. We're going to have to work together.

Lauren: I know, we do, and that's why on Sunday I wanted to talk to you, and that's why I've been wanting to discuss things with you, that's why I don't understand why you have been so cruel and fought me so hard, when I've been trying to work with you - from the second you were arrested I've been trying to work with you.

Russel: Let's do this -

Lauren: You've been turning me down at every turn.

Russel: Lauren, I am - I'll be honest - I'm really struggling with a lot of my emotions, and Sunday was one of them, and I'm - I'd like to be able to talk to you. I'd like to be able for us to work together. I know these 15 minute phone calls don't really provide a whole of meaningful time to do that. Okay?

Lauren: Agreed.

Russel: Hhhh, you and I need to - Look , I feel like we've got hours of things that we have to work through and have some sort of closure - divorced or not - it doesn't really matter - the way that our life got upended, and I know it is my fault, okay? There are things that we need to discuss.

Lauren: I agree. Because, Russ, we - yeah, I totally agree with that. We share the 3 best kids in the universe and they deserve us to work together as much as humanly possible, and I would really like to try to do that.

Russel: Here's some of my concerns - No. 1 -

Lauren: Okay

Russel: I was not expecting the judge to grant the bifurcation. I feel like - well, I won't get into how I feel, but it hurts. More than you will possibly know.

Lauren: Well, not more than I will possibly know, because I understand absolute betrayal - because that's what you did to me.

Russel: So, where I'm at then is, (sigh) we've got to talk. Frankly, it would be easier if we could do it in person. I know that's really not something that's just easily done or whatever else. I wanted to try to have a discussion last summer and it ended up being not a positive experience while Jim kind of sat there and you just told me that we're not going to try - I want this divorce, sign it or, you know - because -

Lauren: Well, no, you told me you were going to drag me down with you, if I didn't drop the -

Russel: No -

Lauren: Yeah, you did.

Russel: No, I - I - Do you know what? We can go back and pull the phone records if you really want to -

Lauren: No, Russ, not the phone records - when I was there with you in person.

Russel: Do you know what I told you with Jim? Let's remember, I told you - Lauren - wait a second, wait a second. The reason I remember -

Lauren: Hold on - okay - the call is going to die in just a minute, so I want you to say, "I want to figure out our next step before the call dies. I'm not trying to cut you off.

Russel: Okay.

Lauren: Okay - but we have just a minute and I will listen to what you have to say about that, okay? I really will.

Russel: Let's do this - we've got a minute - I'm going to call back in 15 minutes. I'd like to talk to just the girls while they're still awake.

Lauren: That would be totally fine.

Russel: Then, if it's okay, so you and I have some time, I can call after this - 3 more times today. Can I call back this evening after the girls are in bed and I can discuss further...?

Lauren: Normally, I would say yes, but I have - since we're in our new ward, I have the Relief Society presidency coming over and then I have the Elders coming to, like, meet me and say hi, and, you know, whatever is that stuff. So, tonight isn't great, just because I have them coming over, after the girls go down. Um, what about tomorrow?

Russel: Sure.

Lauren: Tomorrow night?

Russel: Yes.

Lauren: Okay. What time - (call ends)